

# In-World Marketing in Second Life

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## ABSTRACT:

The aim of this exploratory study is to identify the main advertising tools used in-world in the virtual world Second Life. The main categories of products and services available within the world were defined and divided: the advertising opportunities into free marketing tools, official tools and in-world marketing tools. Second Life creates a unique platform, which allows the creation of a virtual business with profits in real life. Advertising and in-world marketing offers them the option to promote virtual goods. The main marketing tools within the virtual environment are defined and elaborated with specific cases. The lack of literature related to Second Life is visible in the sources and the environment is still unexplored, therefore we used personal experience from our 11 year presence within the virtual environment and virtual business in Second Life.

## KEY WORDS:

advertising, in-world, marketing, marketing tools, second life, virtual business, virtual world.

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# Introduction

The contemporary age allows people to simulate many experiences that would otherwise be out of reach. These simulations mainly revolve around sports, some of the most common being contact sports and motor sports for entertainment. Other simulations can be more focused on therapeutic needs used in the treatment of trauma or phobias such as arachnophobia, for example. More uncommon is to simulate the experience of a human life, one of the most famous and successful simulations of this type was introduced to audiences via the video game *The Sims*<sup>1</sup> in 2000 by Maxis, EA.<sup>2</sup> The Sims can perhaps be better described as a God type game, this is a genus of games where the player assumes the position of an omnipresent entity that controls simulated life forms within the simulation with varying degrees of micromanagement. In the specific case of The Sims, the player had the opportunity to create individuals within the simulation better known as Sims, these Sims are semi-autonomous and have simulated needs such as sleep or eating, but a great level of control exists regarding their interactions with other Sims within the simulation, or their activities at any given time. The player can also choose the career path of their Sims that would earn them in game currency to be used for home improvements. The player could then simulate a human life, even if very limited in scope. The original game didn't have an aging system; a Sim wouldn't grow old no matter how long it existed. Another limitation The Sims had when it came to simulate a human life was the fact that it was a single player game, therefore the Sims created and controlled by a player could never have social interaction with other players' Sims.

The American corporation Linden Research led by Phillip Rosedale, released the virtual world *Second Life*<sup>3</sup>, in 2003, which allowed people to create a virtual character, known as an avatar, join in the virtual environment for free, meet other users, interact with them, create objects, build things like structures, vehicles, apparel among others and expand

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1 MAXIS: *The Sims*. [digital game]. Redwood City : Electronic Arts, 2000.

2 *The Sims*. [online]. [2019-11-01]. Available at: <<https://www.ea.com/news/history-of-the-sims>>.

3 LINDEN LAB: *Second Life*. [virtual world]. San Francisco : Linden Lab, 2003.

the virtual world shaping it and making it their own. The virtual world Second Life is not categorized as a digital game, due the lack of attributes a digital game has to meet that definition and are absent from Second Life.<sup>4</sup> Second Life is a social 3D platform, which offers unlimited options of activities for users to experience. The difference between the virtual world Second Life and other virtual worlds is primarily the economic aspect of the environment, the user can build things and sell those things to each other making this platform almost entirely user created. The adaptation of rights of the author on created objects encourages its users to develop their creations and market them to each other. This possibility allows Second Life users to join the virtual market and build a virtual business along with experiencing advertising within the virtual environment.<sup>5</sup>

## Second Life Virtual Business

The beginning of awareness of the virtual world Second Life was in 2007, when the TV series CSI New York released an episode called 'Down the Rabbit Hole'<sup>6</sup>, which was entirely located in Second Life. The Second Life statistics state the number of users before the episode was released was 10,256,844 and within a month the number of members increased to 11,081,556. While the average of new accounts registration since Second Life was released till 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2007 was 661 members per day, from 24<sup>th</sup> October 2007 till 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2007 the average of new account registration was 26,603 per day. The increase in account registration was 3924.5%.<sup>7</sup> The total number of Second Life users is over 60 million, and around 900,000 accounts log in daily.<sup>8</sup> The Second Life users when joining the market by offering virtual goods created by them or buying goods created by others in the form of objects/products or services use the virtual currency called Linden Dollars used specifically in Second Life. Based on the available market rates, the average exchange rate of the Linden Dollar is L\$253/US\$1. According to Linden Lab, in 2009, "the total size of the Second Life economy grew 65% to US\$567 million, about 25% of the entire U.S. virtual goods market".<sup>9</sup> The main forms of virtual products sold in Second Life are:

- *Avatar Appearance and Components* – body parts that personalize the avatar: mesh heads, mesh bodies, hands, eyes, hair, make up, tattoo,
- *Apparel* – objects that style the avatar's appearance: clothing, shoes, costumes,
- *Accessories* – detailed styling of avatar: earrings, bracelets, watches, bags, hats,
- *Animals* – as simple decorative static objects to enrich the virtual environment visually or advanced objects that can be script driven to animate, move and be interacted with,
- *House and Garden* – objects created specifically to be placed in the world with living or decorative purposes shaping the environment: buildings, trees, furniture, decorations, vehicles,

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4 *Second Life*. [online]. [2019-11-01]. Available at: <[http://wiki.secondlife.com/wiki/History\\_of\\_Second\\_Life](http://wiki.secondlife.com/wiki/History_of_Second_Life)>.

5 BARTLE, R.: *Designing Virtual Worlds*. Boston : New Riders Publishing, 2003, p. 45.

6 VON ANCKEN, D., SCOTT, O., GLASSNER, J., BAILEY, R., MOORE, C., DANTE, J., HUNT, J., HEMINGWAY, A., ADAMS, M. (Directors): *CSI: NY The Fourth Season*. [DVD]. Monica : CBS Television Distribution, 2008.

7 NINO, T.: *Population Statistics*. [online]. [2019-11-01]. Available at: <[http://taterunino.net/raw\\_population.txt](http://taterunino.net/raw_population.txt)>.

8 NINO, T.: *Second Life Statistics*. [online]. [2019-11-01]. Available at: <<http://dwellonit.taterunino.net/sl-statistical-charts/>>.

9 BOELLSTORFF, T.: *Coming of Age in Second Life an Anthropologist Explores the Virtually Human*. Princeton : Princeton University Press, 2015, p. 212.

- *Scripts and technical gadgets* – scripts based on coded algorithms written in LL proprietary language, Linden Scripting Language, abbreviated as LSL that add functionality to objects, and allows them to give features to the objects or parts of an avatar,
- *Service* – services offered in world for members to hire in order to learn, style, entertain, such as: assorted courses, landscaping, live performances,
- *Real Estate* – offering virtual land or sims for rent or sale.<sup>10</sup>

A user who creates a virtual item is automatically marked in the description of the object as the creator and has the fundamental right to decide on the permissions allowed to be used by other users who purchase the product. Each object has three permissions – Copy, Modify and Transfer, which are set by the creator. The Copy permission allows other users to create unlimited number of copies of the item. The Modify permission allows users to modify the object, including re-texturing, resizing, adding scripts, and link them with other objects. The Transfer permission allows the users to send the object to someone else, therefore the object can be sold again this produced a sizable second-hand market for these virtual objects with some users even making investments for later profit.<sup>11</sup> The preferred permissions set on most of the objects are Copy, Modify and No-Transfer, meaning the person who purchased the product can create copies of it, and modify those. The ability to create copies allows not only to account for any mistakes made when the object is being modified but it also allows a number of different copies with different modifications to be had. Once the object is marked as No-Transfer, the members are unable to trade the objects and they remain in their inventory. In case the item has all three permissions allowed, the item becomes what is described as ‘full perm’ meaning the other users can edit, trade or resell the object in most cases unless the original creator has made a provision for its use disallowing the item to be resold as is without modifications.

The virtual environment allows two markets to sell the items, in-world selling where there is a presence of the store in the virtual world and though the online Marketplace which can be viewed in any modern browser or the built in one on the Second Life viewer. One other option that is used more as a novelty than anything else, is the ability to have an object in the virtual world 3D modelled to look like a table, phone or computer and then use the screen of such an object to browse the web, including the Second Life Marketplace which creates a situation where an avatar in the virtual world is using a virtual object’s screen to browse the internet to access a webpage of the virtual world’s market to buy a virtual item.<sup>12</sup> In Second Life, the world is divided in regions, 256 by 256 meters in surface area and 4096 meters high. Each region has a limit of objects it can contain; different objects will contribute to this limit in different amounts, the metric of which is called ‘Land Impact’ abbreviated to LI. These regions are often called ‘sims’. These sims can be sub-dived into parcels by their owners, these parcels will not only create a surface area but will have their own LI limits allocated to them. These parcels can then be rented out to individuals, their perceived value is not just dependent on the surface area, but as much if not more about their allocated LI limit. Selling in-world requires a virtual store or a rented showroom, where the creator displays the items for sale. The most common practice is to rent a parcel in a shopping district with higher traffic of potential buyers or rent an entire sim alone or with other brands and create their own shopping district. This system is flexible enough to accommodate the needs of any creator which can vary depending on the

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10 GAJENDRA, S., SUN, W., LU, Q.: Communication in Second Life and E-business Opportunities: A Case Analysis. In *Information Technology Journal*, 2011, Vol. 10, No. 3, p. 501-502.

11 DE MESA, A.: *Brand Avatar: Translating Virtual World Branding Into Real World Success*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, p. 32.

12 HUCKLEBERRY, H.: *Second Life is a Place We Visit*. Morrisville: Lulu Press, Inc., 2015, p. 40.

nature of the specific products they are trying to sell. While business owners that trade in smaller objects such as clothes or shoes can do so in small parcels with pictures alone while providing demos for other users to sample the products in their own avatars, other creators that trade in larger objects such as buildings, motor vehicles or decorative flora prefer to rent larger parcels or even full sims so they can display their items in world at their full size for the customers to see exactly how they look.

The second market is the online webpage Second Life Marketplace, which is the only official online website connected to Second Life used to purchase products out-of-world. The Marketplace allows the users to upload their products, add them to categories and let the members search the product based on set keywords. Creating a virtual store in the marketplace is for free, but there is a 5% fee from sales, which is applied directly to every purchase. The advantage of having a store in the marketplace is the creator does not have any expenses while maintaining it and the only the applied fee from the actual purchases. One of the disadvantages of having a store in the marketplace only is the categorization of products and in case the product does not have a set of correct key words, it will not be displayed in the search results, therefore the profits will be low. The best solution is to have a mix of both in-world stores with a supported up-to-date marketplace, where all the items will be listed for sale as well. Since the in-world store is limited to Land Impact, retired releases can be moved to the marketplace only and recent releases be made available in world.

## Methodology

The exploratory study focuses on the types of marketing tools available in the Second Life virtual world and the way they are applied. Based on the analysis of secondary sources, we define the basic concepts associated with the virtual environment and the ways of using marketing tools. The data is furthermore collected from structured interviews with the owners of L'Homme Magazine and Miss Organisation, who give deeper insight into the pricing and forms of advertisement in their types of virtual media. Lastly, we examine the ways of advertising in-world and gather knowledge from main sources and possible marketing tools and options inside the virtual environment by participating observation within the virtual world for over 10 years. We formulated the following research question: *Which of the available marketing tools are the most applicable for promotion in Second Life?*

## In-World Marketing Tools

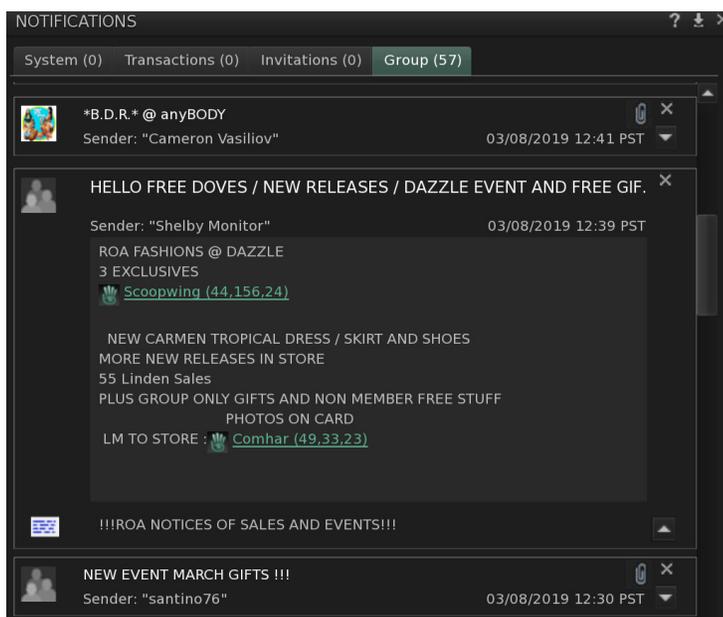
Second Life offers multiple marketing tools to be used to spread information within the gathered community. One of the main communication tools, as well as a marketing tool, is a Group. A Group can be created by anyone and everyone in the community and it costs 100 L\$. Each user has a limit of groups they can join, 42 for a free basic Second Life account or 70 for a premium Second Life account,<sup>13</sup> the cost of which is 99,99 USD/year.<sup>14</sup>

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13 LINDEN, L.: *Group Limits Update: No Changes for Basic Members*. [online]. [2019-11-01]. Available at: <<https://community.secondlife.com/blogs/entry/2559-group-limits-update-no-changes-for-basic-members/>>.

14 *Premium Account Pricing*. [online]. [2019-11-01]. Available at: <<https://secondlife.com/premium/>>.

A Group can be set to allow in users in three different ways. Open for anyone to join freely, set with a joining fee which is a one-time payment a user must make to join that group, or by invite only. One of the features of a Group is the ability to create Roles within it; the Group owner can create several Roles and specify what abilities each Role has within the group from a wide range of managing features. Members of the group can be assigned to these Roles by the owner and some Roles can even have the ability to assign members themselves. Another feature of a Group is the ability to send out Group Notices, these notices pop-up in a window for the members (provided they didn't opt out of receiving them) and can include attachments such as text files or objects (Picture 1).



Picture 1: In-World Group Notices

Source: author's screenshots; LINDEN LAB: *Second Life*. [virtual world]. San Francisco : Linden Lab, 2003.

Since the notice feature itself has a low character limit, text files can be attached to the notice when there is such a need for a larger body of text. Objects like demos for the users to try on their avatars or to see how they look in world can also be sent as well as full featured gift items. Landmarks, the Second Life version of a common web browser bookmark, can also be sent, these when used allow an avatar to auto transport itself to a location in world, described in Second Life as teleporting. The Group has an option to create a group chat within the community to meet and greet the creator, chat about the brand, or have the customers help each other. When a user belongs to a group in Second Life, there are also other abilities that can be set or unlocked, for example, a parcel can be set to only allow inside avatars that belongs to a certain group, or objects can be set to only allow themselves to be interacted with if an avatar belongs to a certain group. Having these abilities a Group can further help promote the brand via group gifts located in world and set to the brand Group, meaning only the members can claim these gifts thus alluring people to join these and stay as members so they can be exposed to Group Notices when these advertise new products.<sup>15</sup> Some users create Groups with the specific intent of

15 MAHAR, S. M., MAHAR, J.: *The Unofficial Guide to Building Your Business in the Second Life Virtual World: Marketing and Selling Your Product, Services, and Brand In-World*. New York : AMACOM, 2009, p. 91.

general advertising; these do not belong to a single brand, and instead focus on themes which can range from fashion, discounts or gifts among others. When such a group successfully attracts a significant number of users, they can be used to send paid promotional notices, brand owners use these to reach a larger or a different audience than the one they might have on their official groups. The fee per promotional notice ranges depending on how many users the group has, usually being around 500 L\$/week.<sup>16</sup>

Another marketing tool used for promotion is Land Listing in the search function. Land Listing has a 30 L\$/week fee which is paid to LL. The search function operates with keywords, and the search results are sorted by the Traffic. In Second Life, Traffic is a numeric value that is calculated in set time intervals per avatar in a parcel for a 24-hour period. The more visitors a parcel receives, and the longer they stay there, the higher the Traffic value will be for the following 24-hour window. Having high Traffic is very desirable since it will mean that place will be shown higher in the search queries in which it is displayed. A third marketing tool provided by Second Life is listing the store in a profile of an avatar. Having the store classified in a profile costs 50 L\$/week and allows the users to see the store linked to specific avatars, which verifies the reliability of the store. The Second Life official website includes a member section, where the users see detailed information on their account, once they log in. Besides information related to the account, the website includes a destination guide and a calendar of upcoming events and offers, where creators are able to promote their events or services.<sup>17</sup> The online Marketplace powered by Second Life offers four types of promotion and advertising of specific products. These advertising slots are paid weekly and allow the designers to display their products in 4 different locations:

- *Feature item on home page* – displays the item on the top of the initial home page where everyone lands first and it costs 899 L\$/week,
- *Feature item on category landing page* – the marketplace is sorted by categories and sub-categories, each item is linked to a category and when someone enters that specific category, the item will be displayed at the top of that page. The advantage of this category is that costumers who visit a specific category are more likely to purchase the promoted product, but the disadvantage is the reach of the advert, having an item displayed on a specific category has less visibility and costs 399 L\$/week,
- *Feature item on the checkout receipt page* – displays the item on the last page, where users are ready to pay, the customers are less likely to purchase the product due to being in the process of finishing the payment for what they wanted, but the product has high exposure and is only displayed to paying customers of Second Life, not window-shoppers and it costs 799 L\$/week,
- *Feature item on the L\$0 cart checkout ads page* – the OL\$ checkout is any invoice that doesn't have a cost, these can be for demos and/or free gifts, but with no guarantee there are users willing to pay for products it costs 299 L\$/week to advertise here.

Besides the official marketing tools provided by Second Life, creators have the option to use marketing tools designed by users that are sold in-world.<sup>18</sup> Another common marketing tool for spreading updates is a Subscriber (Picture 2). A Subscriber is a script driven object that delivers messages to users who are part of its list. They are provided by many different companies, two of the most used are Subscribeomatic and SasTech

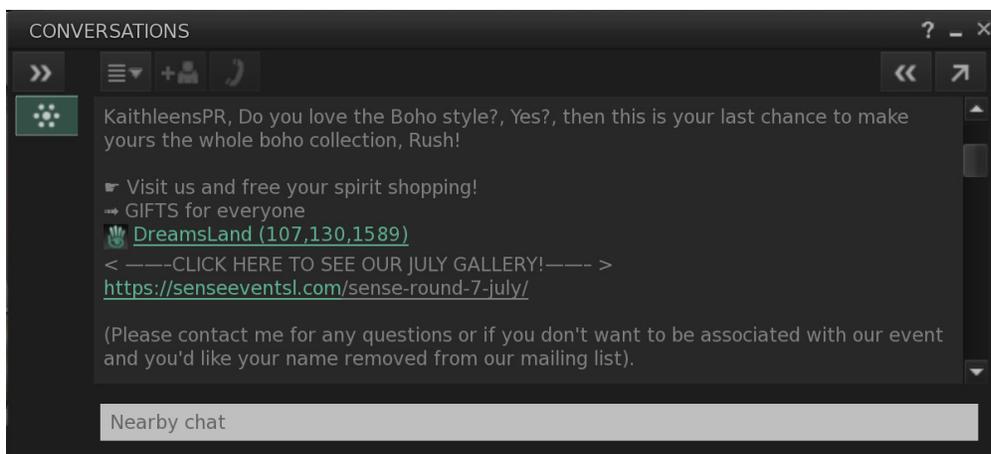
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16 PORUMBEANU, O. L.: References in the Digital Age: Marketing and Services in Virtual Worlds. In *Studii de Biblioteconomie și Știința Informării*, 2008, Vol. 3, No. 12, p. 111.

17 LINDEN LAB: *Second Life*. [digital game]. San Francisco : Linden Lab, 2003.

18 *Marketplace rates*. [online]. [2019-11-01]. Available at: <<https://marketplace.secondlife.com>>.

Subscriber. The advantage of using a Subscriber is it does not take slot in the limited Groups list, so customers that are interested in subscribing to information regarding a brand can still do so without having to worry about a limit. The way these two services work are similar, and the differences are mainly in the payment. While SasTech has one-time purchases for 3,999 L\$ with free lifetime updates,<sup>19</sup> Subscribeomatic is more well-known and charges 5,990 L\$ a month for the unlimited version, offering a free version for non-profit organizations.<sup>20</sup>



Picture 2: Subscriber Notice in Local Chat

Source: author's screenshots; LINDEN LAB: *Second Life*. [virtual world]. San Francisco : Linden Lab, 2003.

## Advertisement in Second Life Media

Just as in real life, Second Life has different types of media including radio, print, streaming and new media. None of these media are owned by Linden Lab and are created by users. The virtual print medium is mainly targeted at fashion and lifestyle, cooperating with top brands on the market. Placing an advert in a high-end magazine gives credit to the brand and exposes it to the target audience with the likelihood of profit. One of the most known magazines is *L'Homme*<sup>21</sup> by Hikaru Enimo, which focuses on male fashion and lifestyle, bringing the latest arrivals to the consumers. In Second Life, the lack of products for men creates high demand for apparel which this magazine targets and capitalizes on the low competition. On this magazine an advert placement can cost anywhere between 7,000 to 20,000 L\$, depending on the size and length and page placement. Other magazines including *Avenue Magazine* focused on female fashion have similar pricing and placement of an advert in the furniture magazine called *LTD – Love to Decorate* is approximately 10,000 L\$.<sup>22</sup> Second Life does not have television, but some organisations

19 STEINBECK, S.: *SasTech Pricing*. [online]. [2019-11-01]. Available at: <<https://marketplace.secondlife.com/p/SasTech-KioskNet-Subscriber-Edition/8874830>>.

20 *Subscribeomatic Pricing*. [online]. [2019-11-01]. Available at: <<http://subscribeomatic.com/pages/pricing>>.

21 For more information, see: *L'Homme Magazine SL November 2019*. [online]. [2019-11-01]. Available at: <[https://issuu.com/lhommemagazines/docs/lhommemagazines\\_november2019](https://issuu.com/lhommemagazines/docs/lhommemagazines_november2019)>.

22 ENIMO, H. (Editor-in-Chief): *Possible ways of promoting within L'Homme*. [Personal interview]. Released on 01. 11. 2019. 2019.

hold events broadcasted live. These shows are mainly targeted at fashion and one of the most famous live shows is MR Second Life and MISS Second Life, pageant shows, held by *Miss Organisation – Marcus Lefevre-Enimo*. The organisation allows the brands to advertise their products on more levels. Sponsorship of the event can be active – based on providing the contestants outfits for the show, creating in-world placement, or passive – displaying logos, without additional exposure of the brand. The sponsorship of fashion shows costs from 5,000 to 20,000 L\$ and is divided into several packages including specific options for the sponsors.<sup>23</sup>

Using radio as a medium for advertisement is not common in Second Life and when used, it is mainly used by estates and services, who want to introduce their products. One of the active radio stations in Second Life is *ENT sl talk radio 69.9*, which provides slots for advertising between the talk shows and music and a pack of 10 slots of 30 seconds costs 4000 L\$ including 4 peak and 6 off-peak adverts. Since Second Life is world-wide, users in different time zones listen to the radio and the peak hours with the most listeners are between 11:00AM to 3:00PM SLT, which is Pacific Standard Time, the real lifetime zone of Linden Lab. The largest website out-of-world, which offers the latest updates on new products is SeraphimSL, with millions of views, which offers many categories including new events, promotion, sales, hunts, free items, thematic products and many others. Exposure on this website is demanded and designers book the side adverts a year ahead. The website offers one-time promotion or permanent promotion with annual renewal. Promoting costs from 2000 L\$/day or 10,000 L\$/month and offers a wide range of options to choose from to fit the goal of the campaign.<sup>24</sup>

## Free Marketing Tools in Second Life

Word of mouth works the same way as in real life and is the strongest marketing tool. If the costumers are happy, they share their experience on social media or leave a review on marketplace. The group chats allow people to communicate and hiring a CSR team allows the companies to moderate the group and encourage happy customers to share their experience with the brand. Beyond that and due to the specific nature of Second Life, users can inspect any object, either decorations placed in world or apparel attached to an avatar to get the name of the original creator, from there and following the profile of the original creator they can find where that item is being sold. Creating a Facebook page or Flickr account to display and promote the products are most common options. Second Life users are active on Flickr and upload edited images with products. These social media allow the customers to interact with the brand and comment, like or share the advertisement. Maintaining these pages is for free and paying Facebook ads is not recommended, since Second Life users are a specific target group, which Facebook is unable to locate and the likes and views would hit regular people, who do not have Second Life accounts. Another tool to promote products is by creating a blogging team, a group of bloggers, who will promote the products to their already established audience, mainly on Flickr, by creating pictures as placing the products into the image, referring to them in the description or tagging the company. Having a group of devoted bloggers known by the public is

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23 *Miss Organization Sponsorship*. [online]. [2019-11-01]. Available at: <<https://mrsl.missslorganization.com/org/sponsorship/>>.

24 *Advertising Rates*. [online]. [2019-11-01]. Available at: <<http://seraphimsl.com/advertising/>>.

an advantage and encourages the costumers to buy products. Second Life bloggers can be compared to real life influencers, since their mission is the same. They influence the Second Life audience, become their role models and recommend products. Bloggers are usually paid with products of the brand that they receive for free and do not create additional expenses.<sup>25</sup>

## Advertising Real Life Product in Second Life

Placement of real-life companies in Second Life was extremely popular between 2010 and 2012, where international brands such as Reebok,<sup>26</sup> Dell,<sup>27</sup> Sony Ericsson<sup>28</sup> and others owned entire sims to display their products in world. This type of advertising is no longer used by real-life brands and they are not displayed in-world. Until recently, when JimmyPaul x Hello Kitty celebrated its 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Japanese company Sanrio cooperated with a Second Life designer Astralia and created a virtual event and product line including clothes, furniture, decorations and accessories that were the same as the real-life products (Picture 3).<sup>29</sup> The 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary is accompanied by a thematic event at the Hello Kitty amusement park with live music, store, games, hang out area and gifts for the visitors. The event is running between 1<sup>st</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> November 2019 and the product line is available for sale only through the duration of the event. The event is being adverted on social media platforms, official Second Life home page and in world on multiple locations.



Picture 3: JimmyPaul x Hello Kitty & Astralia Adverstiment

Source: Astralia Hello Kitty Collection. [online]. [2019-11-02]. Available at: <<https://www.astraliaworld.com/shopping>>.

25 *Marketing tools*. [online]. [2019-11-01]. Available at: <[http://wiki.secondlife.com/wiki/Advertising\\_in\\_Second\\_Life](http://wiki.secondlife.com/wiki/Advertising_in_Second_Life)>.

26 *Reebok*. [online]. [2019-11-01]. Available at: <<http://adverlab.blogspot.com/2006/10/reeboks-store-in-second-life.html>>.

27 MENCHACA, L.: *Dell Gets a Second Life*. [online]. [2019-11-01]. Available at: <<https://blog.dell.com/en-us/3555/>>.

28 *Should You Pursue a "Second Life"?*. [online]. [2019-11-01]. Available at: <<https://light-the-fuse.com/wait-a-second>>.

29 *Hello Kitty and Astralia*. [online]. [2019-11-01]. Available at: <<https://www.astraliaworld.com/shopping>>.

# Summary

The exploratory study introduced the available marketing tools that are used in the Second Life virtual world. We divide them into two main categories: *provided by Second Life*, *provided by the community*. The marketing tools provided by Second Life include group notices, land listing, profile classification and marketplace advertisement and are built in the system, therefore they are available for everyone. The second category includes tools that are created and offered by the community in a form of a product, or a service, such as subscribers, bloggers, media (radio, magazine), agencies and external websites, social networks and word of mouth. These types of marketing tools are not promoted to the community and it is necessary to search them. The following table displays the list of 12 defined marketing tools that are offered by both Second Life and the community with listed form of reach, cost of maintenance, form of advertising, pros and cons. Each of the marketing tools has a unique purpose and a way of advertising, yet we consider five of the marketing tools essential for every virtual business (Table 1).

Table 1: Available Marketing Tools in Second Life

Marketing Tool	Cost	Reach	Pros	Cons	Form
<b>Word of Mouth</b>	free	in-world/ out-of-world	powerful, customer opinion, without expenses	possible rumours	Text
<b>Flickr/ Facebook</b>	free	out-of-world	reaches target group, who follows the brand, without expenses	not possible to apply paid adverts	Text, image, video
<b>Bloggers</b>	free	in-world/ out-of-world	exposes products to wider audience, without expenses	low quality images, not reaching desired target audience	Text, image
<b>Subscriber</b>	from 3999 L\$	in-world	unlimited, reaches customers in-world, one time or monthly expenses	appears in local chat as a notification, people may not notice it or crash without seeing it	Text, attachment (image, landmark, DEMO)
<b>Magazine</b>	from 7000 L\$/ advert	in-world/ out-of-world	high exposure, reaches a specific target group	expensive, reaches the readers of the magazine only	Text, image, landmark
<b>Radio Advert</b>	from 4000 L\$/ 10spots	in-world	expands the target group	risk of not reaching the target group, unable to measure it	Audio

<b>Miss Organisation</b>	from 5000 L\$/ event	in-world/ out-of-world	live streaming, different forms of advertisement – logo, product display, word comments	limited to fashion only, possible lag or low-quality image	Image, video
<b>SeraphimSL</b>	2000-10000L\$/ advert	out-of-world	reaches wide audience and different target groups	waiting list, need to require for adverts months in advance	Text, image
<b>Group Notices</b>	one time 100 L\$	in-world	one-time fee, allows to build own target audience and link store promotion to the group	group limitation in-world, text size limitation	Text, attachment (image, landmark, DEMO)
<b>Marketplace Advert</b>	299-899 L\$/week	in-world/ out-of-world	reaches customers shopping on marketplace, high visibility	relatively expensive, each advert linked to one product only.	Direct product offer
<b>Land Listing</b>	30 L\$/ week	in-world	exposes the landmark in search based on set keywords, low cost	large number of land listings, visibility depending on traffic	Listing in landmarks
<b>Profile Classification</b>	50 L\$/ week	in-world	verification of a place, low cost	low visibility, customers don't focus on profile classification	Landmark in profile

Source: own processing

To answer the research question, *Which of the available marketing tools are the most applicable for promotion in Second Life?*, we target the following marketing tools. It is essential for every starting virtual business to create an official group to promote the products and inform potential customers about new releases through group notices, which later on turns into the official platform for the target audience. The supportive marketing tool is a subscriber for customers, who are unable to join the group due to lack of empty group spots, yet they want to be informed and updated. According to the author, these two marketing tools are the most important tools used in-world. The third recommended in-world tool is Land Listing, which allows the customers to search the virtual business in-world landmark browser. The two recommended out-of-world marketing tools are creating official accounts on social sites like Facebook and Flickr, which help to reach the target audience when not being logged in and forming an official blogger's team. These tools are free of charge and greatly help to build a platform for the target group by displaying the adverts outside the virtual world. Lastly, the rest of the marketing tools can be considered as expansional and advanced for an already established and running virtual business, which desires to expand and broaden the target group.

# Conclusion

After almost 17 years of Second Life existence, it is still a platform with no equal, a world of opportunities still unexplored and if nothing else, the lack of literature related to this specific virtual environment demonstrates so. This virtual world offers a great number of options for running a business, promoting it and becoming a successful and profitable operation. It is necessary to remain up to date with the latest innovations and display these to the users that might be potential customers. The variety of marketing tools allows the creators to reach their audience and set a functional plan for their specific products to secure profits. The main and most used marketing tools are Group advertisement, active social media and a blogging team. By using these three marketing tools, the store can be displayed to the costumers in-world, out-of-world and reach new target groups through the bloggers. The key to success is to know the community, understand it and be a part of it in order to be able to develop a product of interest, otherwise no marketing tool will be functional. We conclude the importance of staying attractive to the audience; Second Life must continue developing and expanding advertisement techniques out of the virtual environment. Advertising beyond the virtual world in the form of videos, where people are able to see the diversity of activities can bring more users into the world and widen the virtual business. It is necessary to point out the advertising options to the existing virtual business, because some of the older businesses are not making use, likely due to the absence of information, especially classification tools and listing land tool, which are paid weekly, and can bring more traffic to the stores. Lastly the update of groups supporting multimedia or drag in adverts could help the advertisement, so the costumers could see the advert without downloading the attachment of the notices. There is still enough space to improve the advertising tools within the virtual world and more to come out-of-world.

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